

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

March 5, 2004

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 5, 2004, **DAMON HARTLEY**, age 25, of Belleville, Illinois, was sentenced before the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois, East St. Louis, Illinois, to 47 months' imprisonment, and 5 years' supervised release. The Court also ordered **DAMON HARTLEY** to pay restitution to the victims of his crimes.

DAMON HARTLEY pled guilty on December 1, 2003, to a federal indictment which charged two (2) counts of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341 (Mail Fraud); two (2) counts of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344 (Bank Fraud); and, one (1) count of Title 31, United States Code, Section 5324(a)(3) (Structuring Financial Transactions to Avoid IRS Reporting Requirements).

In a stipulation filed by the defendant and the government at the time of his guilty pleas, it was indicated that **HARTLEY'S** first mail fraud conviction is the result of his false representations to numerous elderly victims in relation to his sales to these victims of purported Medicare supplemental insurance policies. These false representations were made during the time period December 27, 2002 through at least April 11, 2003, while **HARTLEY** was employed as a sales representative for Americare Insurance Company in Collinsville, Illinois. **HARTLEY'S** second mail fraud conviction is the result of his misappropriation of a mother's death benefits check during November, 2002, while he was employed as a sales representative for American Income Life Insurance Company in Swansea, Illinois, and his efforts at concealing the theft. **HARTLEY'S** structuring conviction is the result of his structuring multiple cash withdrawals at Union Planter's Bank branches in Belleville, Illinois and Swansea, Illinois, during December 2002, in order to avoid IRS reporting requirements. **HARTLEY'S** first bank fraud conviction is the result of his depositing fake and bogus checks into a business account which he set up at UMB Bank in Swansea, Illinois, during July, 2003. Hartley printed the bogus checks on his home computer. **HARTLEY'S** second bank fraud conviction is the result of his depositing checks drawn on a closed account into a business account which he set up at Union Planter's Bank in Fairview Heights, Illinois, during December, 2002, and withdrawing funds from the account thereafter.

The successful prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service, and information obtained by the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations. The prosecution of the case was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Hal Goldsmith.